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REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

The Development of Religion. A Study in Anthropology and Social Psychology. IRVING KING. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1910. Pp. 371.

Herbert Spencer sought the origin of religion in ancestor worship, Frazer in magic, and Tylor in dreams, reflections, and similar phenomena; Dr. King believes that he finds it in the values which mankind in society place upon the objects and beings with which they are surrounded. In his own language he holds "that the social organization and its activities constitute the ground from which religious practices and religious consciousness itself are the more or less complex development."

In the introduction to his main argument the writer contends for a treatment of religious phenomena in no way different from that accorded to the other phenomena of which psychology takes cognizance. "For the psychologist," he says, "religious phenomena are primarily reactions of a certain kind and as such have some sort of setting within the life process of the individual or at least of the race . . . if a reaction toward certain ends is admitted as a fact." In his second chapter he takes up some preliminary questions regarding the evolution of religion, in which he takes the ground that religious ceremonials and other outward religious acts, instead of being results of religious consciousness, have actually been the cause of that consciousness. "The religious consciousness has been built up, or differentiated, from a background of overt activity and relatively objective phases of consciousness." "The assumption underlying the problem is," Dr. King goes on to say, "that the religious attitude of mind has had a natural history, that there was a time in the history of the race when a definite religious attitude did not exist, and that, in its genesis and in its development, it has been conditioned by the same laws according to which other mental attitudes have come into being." This naturally renders it necessary to study "the consciousness of value" which must determine the overt activities and hence the evolution of the religious consciousness, and to this the author next addresses his attention, finding confirmation of his belief in religious customs of the Malays, Australians, Indians, and other peoples.

From the ground of these "simple values" Dr. King now believes he can erect "those higher valuations of conduct, and even the so-called highest religious conceptions, those of God, freedom, and immortality," tracing their origin to "the influence of the social group upon the simpler values." He considers it demonstrated that the type of religion varies with the character of the social organization, and to support this conclusion he again appeals to the results of ethnological research. "Creation myths," he thinks, "are symbols of a certain type of value which can appear only among well-developed social groups."

Dr. King's next step is to prove that "The religious acts and ideas

are themselves an organic part of the activities of the social body," and hence the origin of religious practises and ceremonials. "Some ceremonials and religious practises seem to be the outgrowth of adjustments which to the savage are decidedly practical. Others seem to be more related to play, to sports of various kinds, and still others seem to be the outgrowth of feasts of rejoicing before or after the harvest or hunt, or of feasts and dances preceding the departure of a war party, or after its return."

At this point in his line of argument Dr. King finds it necessary to introduce another factor or concept, viz., "the notion . . . that there is in the universe, as the primitive man knows it, an undefined and hence more or less impersonal force, a force extremely potent in nature and in the affairs of human life, and with which man may in various ways come into *rapport*." The existence of this belief is supported in a lengthy discussion accompanied by a multitude of ethnological references. This leads by a natural transition to a consideration of the relation between this power and magic, and between the latter and religion taken in toto. Dr. King discusses Frazer's theory of the origin of religion from magic, concluding that "both magical and religious practises are diverse growths, not from any particular theory or hypothesis regarding the world, but rather from the primitive complex of naive reactions." One of the cardinal distinctions between the two is that religion "develops most readily in the atmosphere of the group" while magic is "relatively an individualistic affair." Dr. King warns the student very properly against arranging religious types in series similar to those in biology, holding that "the only continuity in religious evolution is . . . the continuity of the social background, which under varying conditions produces varying types of religious growth."

So much of the preceding argument has dealt with vague religious ideas, that it now becomes necessary to account for those more definite, personal concepts which we term deities. This question is discussed at considerable length, but Dr. King finds their origin naturally enough in the social character of religion itself, definite deities having arisen from social matrices, largely through the association of the general power just noted with concrete things in the external world, especially human beings. Deities vaguely conceived are accounted for by supposing they were formerly prominent in tribal beliefs, but have lost that position owing to a shift in popular interest, depending perhaps on economic causes. Turning now to Hebrew and Christian monotheism, Dr. King shows that they by no means stand apart from other religions involving belief in personal deities, and he cites instances of the existence of monotheistic cults in a number of primitive tribes. He considers that in each case this belief was due to the working out by the tribe in question of its own peculiar environmental problems, and is inclined to agree with Budde, that Yahweh owed his unique, exalted position to the Babylonian captivity when the localized deities of Canaan naturally lost all of their specific significance. "Instead, then, of assuming that a metaphysical being gradually unfolds himself to mankind and little by little brushes

away the false gods, we should say that man, through reflection upon the practical problems of life, especially such as grow out of the ethics of custom, has come to deeper and more vital conceptions of value."

Regarding the relationship between religion and morals Dr. King says: "Our view of the religious consciousness, as built up through social custom and enriched through social intercourse, suggests a relationship between religion and morality that has not been sufficiently recognized in many treatments of the subject. Morality, as its etymology suggests, refers also to the customary, and on this ground we may argue with much assurance for the view that primitive morals and primitive religion are but two sides of the same thing," certain rules of conduct being necessary to the material well-being of the society, and this involves rules of conduct *conceived* to be necessary to its well-being as well as those that actually are.

"Religion and the Pathological" is made the subject of a distinct chapter and is skillfully handled, but the author is not inclined to lay too much stress on pathological features, while admitting them as of contributory importance. Dr. King's purely psychological treatment of religion in the body of his work leads him to say a word in his final chapter—a word very well said, by the way—as to the objective reality of religious concepts. His belief in this particular is "that our formulas and symbols err, not in overstating the possibilities of experience, but rather in narrowing down these possibilities and tending to limit them for all time." Again he says, "If the question of the reality of the order of existence postulated by religion is raised, we should have to say that probably all the concepts of religion fall *short* of an adequate account of experience *rather* than that they attribute too *much* to it." He takes the pragmatic position that after all the value which any religious concept or dogma has is in answering the practical appeal of some moment in the world's history, and that subsequent attempts to prove its validity apart from that practical appeal are bootless, the occasion for its existence having passed away.

The view-point and line of argument of the author of this work are mainly psychological and philosophical, so that an anthropologist is at considerable disadvantage in endeavoring to characterize it properly. Its vital weakness in the conception of his reviewer, when looked at from an anthropological standpoint, is that he several times falls into the error of which he so justly accuses Dr. Frazer, the treatment of certain attitudes as successive which are in fact contemporaneous. Thus while Dr. King criticizes Frazer for treating religion as an outgrowth of magic instead of another phase of the same phenomenon, he himself presupposes a social matrix out of which religious concepts arise and again he presupposes a belief in some vague general power, which *later* assists in the composition of personal deities. As a matter of ethnological fact we everywhere have society and practically everywhere we have belief in some general super-normal power and in personal deities. If individual tribes seem to lack either of these latter elements it is evident that they represent incidental

aberrations from an ethnological norm rather than survivals from any universal general condition. The sympathetic relation between society and religion, so carefully traced by Dr. King, is as certain as it is interesting, but too much stress should not be put upon it. When a tribe acquires a closely knit organization it is natural that the leaders within that organization should desire for it the most powerful supernatural support, and in the acquirement of this a tribal cult follows almost infallibly. In recording this official faith, since it is theoretically accepted by all members of the tribe, the student believes he has recorded the faith of the entire tribe, and naturally enough finds it more logical and definite than the beliefs of loosely organized bands where there is no recognized priesthood, *i. e.*, no theological specialists. But does the average layman in the highly organized tribe really have less vague beliefs than the average layman in tribes loosely organized? Would the one not be found as "vague" as the other? Again by "vagueness" is lack of an official religion meant, or lack of agreement in the religious beliefs of individuals in the same tribe? If the latter be a criterion of vagueness where shall we find more than in the midst of our occidental civilization? These considerations tend to weaken the thesis that the more definite character of religious beliefs and practises among highly organized tribes is proof of the social origin of religion. In fact there is no ethnological proof that religion is more a social than an individual phenomenon. Nor is the supposition that creation myths are most highly developed among well-organized tribes uniformly true, since some of the loosely organized California peoples have creation myths of a more philosophical character than do the better developed tribes of the eastern woodlands and north Pacific coast.

With Dr. King's contention for a purely scientific examination of religious phenomena untrammelled by any mystical consideration—except such as science itself may compel the investigator to recognize—the reviewer is heartily in sympathy, as also with his similar contention against drawing a sharp line of demarcation between monotheism and other forms of religion. The argument is generally well thought out and the book shows evidence of much research. In the judgment of the reviewer, however, it is of permanent value, not as it explains the origin of religion, but as it shows the sympathetic relation existing between social and religious concepts and activities. In his last chapter, indeed, Dr. King appears to undo a large part of his own earlier argument, for if "our formulas and symbols err, not in overstating the possibilities of experience, but rather in narrowing down these possibilities and tending to limit them for all time," it is preposterous to suppose that a half-truth has been evolved without any reference to the whole, or in other words that there has been a striving toward certain objects without any intimation of the existence of such objects.

In his preface Dr. King mentions as a difficulty to one seeking to interpret primitive religion that "one who has first-hand acquaintance with some of the natural races, and especially with their languages, naturally

looks with some suspicion upon the attempts of the psychologist to say anything worth while regarding primitive custom or religion, if, indeed, he even takes notice of such attempts at all." On the contrary, the majority of field anthropologists must realize that they are but blazing the way for the comparative student, and they are pleased to know that the facts which they are doing their best to obtain from our rapidly disappearing primitive races are being utilized by the comparative student. One suggestion might be offered in conclusion, however, and that is that more use be made of mythic material recorded among these various races than of the general conclusions of anthropologists themselves, which are, of course, second hand and may sometimes be unduly biased in favor of this or that pet theory.

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An Outline of Logic. BOYD HENRY BODE. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1910. Pp. x + 324.

The author regards logic as training in reasoning and in clear thinking generally (Preface, p. v); accordingly, he lays most stress on those parts of logical doctrine which will show the student how to draw correct conclusions and to avoid fallacies. Ambiguity, a chief source of error, is treated thoroughly and practically; the traditional discussion of the syllogism is abridged; circumstantial evidence is assigned a place of importance; and the recognized inductive methods are somewhat rearranged, with a view to distinguishing proof of causal connections from that of merely universal connections. The author believes—and we think rightly—that the applications of logic in science have been too exclusively emphasized in the past (Preface, p. v) to the neglect of its applications in every-day opinion about matters of practical interest; hence most of his illustrations are drawn from current political and social questions. Yet he does not glide too lightly over the deeper issues concerning the nature of thought, of proof, of the test of truth, which are bound to appear in the course of the work. The concreteness and admirable clearness of his exposition are combined to an unusual extent with thoroughness of thinking and fairness to opposing doctrines.

As a working definition of reasoning he adopts in the introductory chapter the following: "reasoning or inference occurs whenever we assert something to be true on the ground that something else is true. When the reasoning is intended to convince some one else of the truth of the assertion, it is usually called argument" (p. 2). The final definition accepted is given in Chapter XIV., "The Nature of Reasoning," and is that of Professor James: "the substitution of parts and their implications or consequences for wholes," wherein "the part that is substituted for the whole is the point of resemblance or difference" (p. 216). At bottom, differences in reasoning ability exist because "men differ enormously in their sensitiveness to resemblances and differences" (p. 226) and "in the